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Keys to Total Health

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### #12 - "None of These Diseases"

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# Keys to Total Health

PRODUCED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH EDUCATION, SCHOOL OF HEALTH

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## **“None of These Diseases”**

### **What is Total Health?**

The question is often asked, “What is total health?” According to the World Health Organization: “Health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity;” that “enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being without distinction of race, religion, political belief, economic or social condition.”

In our search for total health it is appropriate that we go back to the early history of man and his relationship to his Maker. God promised in Sacred Scripture: “If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in His sight, and wilt give ear to His commandments, and keep all His statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the Lord that healeth thee.” (Exodus 15:26) The diseases referred to were the common diseases of Egypt and other ancient nations of the Middle East. The study of paleopathology has revealed that the Egyptian people suffered from many of the same diseases that Americans suffer from today—coronary heart disease, arthritis, cancer, and other degenerative diseases. Cancer was less common than coronary heart disease; however, it did occur.

What is total health? How can we experience it? The purpose of this series of lessons is to give you the information you need to prevent the diseases most common in our society.

Denis P. Burkitt, the well-known physician, states that the majority of diseases to which western man is succumbing are preventable. People in the United States, Great Britain, and other developed countries, by the lifestyle they have selected, have also chosen the manner in which they will die. In our search for total health we will explore the causes of heart disease, cancer, arthritis, and other chronic diseases so that we may escape the unnecessary suffering which these diseases inflict upon civilization.

In the United States one million heart attacks occur annually. 660,000 people die and 170,000 of these deaths

occur in men still in their productive years. One of the underlying causes of heart disease is a condition known as atherosclerosis, or the deposit of cholesterol on the artery walls.

Autopsies of Egyptian mummies reveal a similar condition in ancient Egypt. The classical case is that of Merneptah, a Pharaoh of the nineteenth dynasty. Not only were his arteries plugged with cholesterol deposits, but his teeth were badly decayed, he suffered from severe arthritis, and was extremely obese. Merneptah is only an example of a number of mummies of that time period who suffered coronary disease.

Arteriosclerosis affected the young in Egypt. Interestingly autopsies of young American soldiers killed in the Korean and Vietnam wars showed a similar pathology. The

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**“Health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity;” that “enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being without distinction of race, religion, political belief, economic or social condition.”**

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causes of this phenomena are related: lack of exercise, stress, obesity and a rich diet high in sweets and fats.

This instruction was given to the ancient Hebrews through Moses: "Ye shall eat no manner of fat, of ox, or of sheep, or of goat. And the fat of the beast that dieth of itself, and the fat of that which is torn with beasts, may be used in any other use: but ye shall in no wise eat of it." (Leviticus 7:23,24) Thousands of lives could be saved every year if Americans just followed this one biblical precept.

In future lessons we will look at some of the other Bible measures for prevention of heart disease, such as exercise, avoidance of poisonous plants (such as tobacco), stress management, and weight control. We will also detail the biblical dietary counsel and compare it with modern recommendations of the American Heart Association.

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## **1 million heart attacks in the United States annually!**

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## **Causes of Arteriosclerosis**

- ☐ lack of exercise
  - ☐ stress
  - ☐ obesity
  - ☐ rich diet
- 

Tetanus and hepatitis were common ailments in ancient Egypt. As one measure to prevent these conditions, the Bible forbids tatooing. "Ye shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor print any marks upon you: I am the Lord." (Leviticus 19:28). Human excreta was to be buried outside of camp. This provision would prevent many contagious diseases.

Quarantine for contagious diseases originated with the Mosaic health code and helped control the spread of disease (see Numbers 5:2,3). Garments which were contaminated were to be washed or burned (Leviticus 13:47-59). Homes were inspected and mildew and fungus were not tolerated. If they could not be controlled, the house was ordered replastered (Leviticus 14:34-42).

Strict sexual morality was imposed. "Thou shalt not commit adultery" (Exodus 20:14), applied with equal force to both men and women. In Egypt, where prostitution was an accepted institution, gonorrhea was rampant and caused much blindness in the offspring. The Lord warned His people that they would suffer the same fate if they failed to follow His instructions. "The Lord will smite thee with the botch of Egypt, and with the emerods, and with the scab, and with the itch, whereof thou canst not be healed. The Lord shall smite thee with madness, and blindness, and astonishment of heart: And thou shalt grope at noonday, as the blind gropeth in darkness..." (Deuteronomy 28:27-29). Sexually transmitted diseases are rampant in the western world as they were in Egypt. Teen pregnancies, abortions, infidelity and the resultant social diseases are a common part of the contemporary scene. The only solution to our modern dilemma is the instruction given to the ancient Israelites: "Thou shalt not commit adultery." (Exodus 20:14).

In early Egypt medical science was highly developed. From Imhotep, the earliest known physician, down to Grecian times, the Egyptians used drugs, surgery, antiseptics and other treatments to try to cure disease. But the Mosaic health code does not give a single prescription. The basic difference between the Mosaic health code and the Egyptian medical papyrus was that the medical papyrus dealt with cure while Moses was concerned with prevention of disease.

This series of lessons will emphasize the Biblical concept of prevention. We will consider a number of Biblical health topics. These Biblical concepts are the *Keys to Total Health*.



## **The Beginning of Disease**

When man first came forth from the Creator's hand, his perpetual health and happiness depended upon fresh air, sunlight, pure water, exercise, the Edenic diet, periodic rest, abstemiousness and an abiding trust in his Maker. Before sin entered, man needed no other "remedies".

Man's first need was oxygen. "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." (Genesis 2:7). The atmosphere, created on the second day, was essential to the survival of plants, animals and man.

The fourth day of creation week provided sunlight with its life-giving properties. Although his entire body was exposed to the rays of the sun, man did not have to fear the pain of sunburn. The inspired record continues, "And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads." (Genesis 2:10). These four rivers: Pison, Gibon, Hiddekel and Euphrates, provided fresh water for man to drink and with which to cleanse and refresh his body.

Man was not created to be idle. "And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it." (Genesis 2:15). From the beginning useful exercise was a component of man's existence. Idleness results in atrophy, while useful physical activity promotes strength, vigor, and happiness.

In the garden, man was sustained on a diet of grains, nuts and fruits. "And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat." (Genesis 1:29). Green vegetables and grasses were reserved for animals. "And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so." (Genesis 1:30).

Man needed rest, which was provided by darkness (Genesis 1:5) and by the weekly Sabbath. "And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made." (Genesis 2:2). "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." (Mark 2:27).

From the beginning man was required to practice abstemiousness. "And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." (Genesis 2:16,17). Man's trust in God was to provide him with wisdom, health and happiness. But man failed to trust God and indulged in the forbidden fruit, thus plunging the race into transgression.

## **After the Fall**

After sin entered, vegetables were added to man's diet. "Thou shalt eat the herb of the field." (Genesis 3:18). Man's exercise was intensified. "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread." (Genesis 3:19). Man became subject to death. "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." (Genesis 3:19). Illness, fatigue and disease became a possibility. More than ever, man needed to abide by the natural laws of his being to maintain health and happiness.

Disease was absent in the beginning of earth's history. Injuries did not become infected. Roy L. Moodie, a palaeopathologist, gives these reasons why "the early faunas were free of disease." First, "the most ancient bacteria. . . were harmless." They were not disease

producing. Second, "It is probable that the natural immunity of the early animals was sufficiently strong to resist the invasion by any pathogenic organisms in sufficient numbers to produce disease."

Moodie adds this observation: "The antiquity of disease and the early breaking down of the natural immunity which had protected the first races of animals is an interesting addition to our knowledge of disease."

## **After the Flood**

After the flood, man was permitted for the first time to add flesh food to his diet. This resulted in a greatly reduced life span. God had declared prior to the deluge, "My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years." (Genesis 6:3).

Moodie attributes disease in early man to "coexisting animals." He says that early man was "afflicted with the same maladies." This is probably due to the fact that flesh was now part of man's diet, and through eating the flesh of the animals, man contracted many of the diseases which afflicted these animals.

After the flood man began to congregate into cities. This accelerated the spread of disease. Man now had problems of waste disposal, disposal of human excreta, crowding, increased exposure to communicable diseases, and risk of a contaminated water supply. So the combination of a flesh diet and city living resulted in a greatly reduced life expectancy. After the flood man became increasingly interested in cure rather than prevention. But while the surrounding nations placed emphasis on prescriptions and cures, the Biblical record presents a program of prevention of disease for the Hebrews. These lessons are based on the Biblical concept of prevention.

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"NONE OF THESE DISEASES"

1. What is your definition of total health? \_\_\_\_\_

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2. Why would God's promise to protect his people from the diseases of the Egyptians be encouraging to us today?

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3. Name several diseases the Egyptians suffered from which are common today.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_ 5. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_ 6. \_\_\_\_\_

4. What health principles from the Old Testament give good advice to help avoid the leading killers of today?

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5. What is a good way to avoid common sexually transmitted diseases? \_\_\_\_\_

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6. We may often think of heart disease as a disease of the aged but what studies showed that young men are in danger too?

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7. After looking at four harmful practices which raise the risk of heart and blood vessel disease can you suggest four helpful health practices that will be protective?

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_\_\_

8. What was the major difference between the health writings of Moses and the medial writings of the Egyptians of the same time?

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